SOME NEW BOOKS.

The Lower South.

The Macmillans have done wisely in publishing in book form a collection of essays entitled *The Lower South in American History*, by WILLIAM GARROTT BROWN. The three papers which constitute the core of the book, and especially justify the title, reproduce substantially certain lectures that were delivered by the author at Harvard University and various Southern colleges. They depict successively the rise of the cotton States, the temporary ascendency of the Lower South in the Union and the final struggle which preceded Secession. Mr. Brown's aim is to make us understand the slave-holding civilization which dominated the Union for some thirty years, and, when domination seemed threatened, strove desperately to organize a separate confederacy. The author regards the slave-holding aristocracy of the Lower South with intense sympathy, but this is not equivalent to saying that he looks upon their political designs with approval. He does not invite us to commend, or even to admire, the Secessionists; he simply tries to make us understand them. His purpose, he tells us in a preface, is neither to defend nor to arraign, but merely to investigate and elucidate; to interpret for us a civilization which many have deemed foreign to American ideas; to review a political enterprise which has often been condemned as contrary to American principles. "I wish," he says, "to inquire whether that civilization and that political enterprise were a natural outcome of material conditions, and of what went before, not whether they were right or wrong. I wish to inquire whether the men and women of that time and region had the ordinary qualities of human nature, not whether they were better or worse than the men and women of other lands and times."

The region which Mr. Brown has in mind is the southernmost zone of the United States, oftenest designated nowadays as the Cotton States. The period to which he refers is the long term of material development, of territorial expansion and of domestic controversy, which intervened between the admission of Missouri in 1820 and the secession of South Carolina in 1860. This section of the Union differed materially from the Upper South, not so much, indeed, as Virginia differed from Massachusetts, but enough to make it needful to distinguish between the two groups of Southern States. Before pointing out, however, the differences between the Lower South and the Upper South, our author has something to say about the differences between the whole South on the one hand and the whole North on the other.

He begins by recognizing that the differences between the North and the South were not plainly racial. The main stock of settlers North and South was English. Neither is it true that Virginia and the Carolinas were peopled from one rank of English society and New England from another. Mr. Brown is not one of those superficial persons who contrast the Puritan and the Cavalier, and dramatize our long sectional controversy into a picturesque conflict between Virginian Ruperts and New England Cromwells. His view of the matter, which is unquestionably the right view, is thus set forth: "That Massachusetts was settled mainly by preachers and tinkers is still a prevalent notion in the South, while the corresponding notion that the early Virginians were mainly cadets of noble houses is also still entertained, though of late years Eastern writers have often intimated that even distinguished Virginian families are sprung from indentured servants. Neither the Southern boast nor the Eastern sneer is justified by a careful investigation of the facts. President Tyler of William and Mary College, the foremost of Virginian antiquaries, after long study of many genealogies, finds himself distinctly reassured as to the quality of early immigration. A fair judgment, perhaps, is that the nobility and the country gentry were represented in Virginia in about the same proportions as in Old England. But the English middle class, from which New England drew the mass of her colonial population, though to the southward also it was represented more fully than any other class, was not so well represented there as in New England. The truth seems to be that the top and the bottom of English society, and not the middle only, were drawn upon to people Virginia, while New England was stocked almost wholly from the middle parts. If one struck a balance, the two Colonial groups were very nearly on a par in the matter of the English blood in them. The distinction which Virginia had in her upper class was balanced by the greater homogeneity of New England's population and the comparative unimportance there of the lowest class of Englishmen."

As regards, then, the race and class from which they sprang, the settlers of Virginia and of Massachusetts were not materially different. There were negro slaves in Virginia and also in Colonial Massachusetts, though there was no economic excuse for their presence in the latter colony. French Huguenots came to the Carolinas and also to Boston. Many of the Scotch-Irish settled in New Hampshire, as well as in the western parts of Virginia and North Carolina. The inflow of the Catholic Irish, of Germans, Italians, Swedes and other comparatively new race elements into the North may be said to have begun about 1847-48, and had no important effect in heightening the differences between the sections before the Civil War. Mr. Brown repeats that "the only really important differences that had to do with race were the greater homogeneity of the English stock in New England, the greater mass of blacks in the South and the larger proportion among the whites there, both of such as had always been used to places of authority and of such as had always looked up to the authority of others."

Of more importance, but still not of the first importance, were the differences in religious traditions. The author reminds us that the English, or so-called Episcopal, Church, never had much strength in New England until comparatively recent years, whereas in Virginia, up to the time of the great Methodist movement, its ascendency was uncontested. "Before the Revolution, however, Methodists and Baptists and Presbyterians were already numerous in the South, and, since the colonies became States, no one of the Southern States has had a majority of the Episcopalian faith and form of worship. Nevertheless, that long remained the leading denomination among the upper classes of Southern society, and, through its vestry plan of church government, and its organization by parishes, it had a strong influence on the social and political life of the people—far stronger and more important than any loyalist sentiment, or any aristocratic notions about government which may have survived the Revolution. It contributed more to that divergence which gradually in two centuries or thereabouts, from perfectly natural causes, and through no sudden or dramatic processes, made communities which began with the same political ideas unlike in their political, no less than in their economic and social arrangements."

The economic and industrial differences between the North and the South were manifest early in the Colonial period. Commerce, seafaring and manufactures, the sources of the wealth of New England, were practically unknown in the Southern States, outside of the city of Charleston. The plantation system, as developed in Virginia, and there applied chiefly to the culture of tobacco, evolved a society made up of several layers or ranks. "The slaves were at the bottom. A considerable bulk of impecunious whites, ill-educated, lacking industry and initiative, getting their livelihoods mainly from the poorer soils, was next in rank above the negroes. A comparatively small body of white mechanics, tradesmen and artisans held a doubtful place. Farmers with reasonable holdings and planters with great holdings, the two classes not clearly separated, but, on the contrary, almost merged into one class, were dominant politically and industrially. With them were associated the members of the learned professions. The lawyers, in particular, were important members of society. It was a group of Virginian planters and lawyers who, after 200 years of that life, proved by their work in Revolutionary times, and by their nobly-rounded careers, that a slaveholding community, without commerce, without manufactures, without cities, without common schools, could yet produce men of the very highest wisdom and capacity for leadership."

So much for the differences between the South, taken as a whole, and the North. One of the fundamental differences between Virginia and the Lower South was the difference in the attitude toward slavery and the plantation system taken by distinguished Virginians of the Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary eras, on the one hand, and that assumed on the other by representative men in the Lower South between 1830 and 1860. Touching this difference, our author recalls that "Jefferson bitterly lamented the fact of slavery, opposed the spread of it, placed the utmost emphasis upon the value of New England's town meetings, and, by destroying primogeniture, aimed a blow directly at the plantation system. Washington's misgivings were as gloomy. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, it was clear that Virginia and the other States of the Upper South, if left to themselves, would almost certainly change their industrial system. Changes in their social and political systems would naturally have followed. As late as the beginning of the fourth decade of the nineteenth century, there still seemed a chance that Jefferson's counsels would be heeded. Slavery in Virginia was a failure, as compared with free labor in the North; the profits of tobacco growing on the plantation plan did not begin to make amends for the lack of those countless material enterprises into which the people of Commonwealths but little farther north, whose climate and natural resources did not essentially differ from Virginia's, had pressed with eager energy." As the power of Virginia declined, however, the power of the Lower South rose. The men of the Cotton States succeeded, not, indeed, to such preeminence as the Revolutionary Virginians had won, but to such a clear leadership of the South, and to such an ascendancy in Congress and the Federal Courts, that for a quarter of a century they battled successfully with the men and the ideas of the East and West.

As regards the form which Virginian society took in the Lower South, under which term the author comprehends South Carolina and Georgia on the east, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, parts of Tennessee, Louisiana, eastern Texas and Arkansas, the opinion is expressed that it has been examined heretofore, mainly from the outside and usually under guidance of general economic and moral theories. With entire fairness Mr. Brown describes what he deems the inadequate view of society in the Lower South, which Mr. Cairnes, Mr. F. L. Olmsted and other intelligent travelers derived from observation and reflection. "The labor of slaves in the culture of cotton, rice and sugar cane was profitable when employed on a large scale, and on rich lands, which lands, however, it soon exhausted, and so created a constant demand for fresh lands. Slave labor on the other hand was unavailable for manufactures, and far less profitable than free labor in the growing of small crops, because a slave has no incentive to thrift, care, honesty and intelligence. It left no place for free labor of the manual sort, because it made such labor disgraceful. It tended to put wealth and power of all sort into the hands of a small class, because small holdings were less profitable than large, and thus brought about the rule of an oligarchy of slaveholders reducing the great mass of whites to a state of indigence, ignorance and listlessness. Mr. Cairnes describes them as 'an idle and lawless rabble who live dispersed over vast plains in a condition little removed from absolute barbarism.' This rabble, he says, numbered about five millions. The oligarchy of great planters, supreme at home and wielding in national politics the power freely rendered up to them by millions of Southern poor whites, and also the power they got through the Constitutional arrangement which gave them representation in Congress for three-fifths of their slaves, managed by alliances with certain weak elements in Northern society, to dominate the Government at Washington. They used their power cruelly at home, for contact with slaves bred contempt for the weak, and unscrupulously at Washington, aiming always to protect themselves in their peculiar rights of property, and to secure, by breaking old agreements concerning territory already acquired, and by ruthless conquest of other territory, those fresh lands which slavery and the plantation system constantly demanded."

Mr. Brown concedes that every one of the forces here enumerated was at work, and that every one of the tendencies here mentioned was manifest, in the Lower South. Nevertheless, he says that he cannot recognize the picture as a true likeness of that civilization which existed in the Lower South during the thirty years preceding the Civil War. He cannot recognize it, although he has given some years of patient inquiry into the written and printed records of the civilization above outlined, although he has followed the history from year to year of a particular Southern State, to wit, Alabama, and although he has had an intimate acquaintance with the men and women of the old slavery régime, and has long studied the remnants of the ancient and outworn vesture of decay still hanging in shreds and patches about the revivified South of our own time. He cannot recognize the picture, he says, for the reason that "it was no economic man, no mere creature of desires, and interests, and inevitable mental processes on whom these forces played, and in whom these tendencies were at work. It was a Virginian but a few decades removed from Washington and Yorktown, from Jefferson and the Declaration, from Madison and the Constitution, from Mason and the Bill of Rights. It was a Carolinian but one or two generations from Marion and Rutledge and the two Pinckneys. It was an Englishman with centuries of the tradition of ordered liberty and slow progress in his inmost thought, and in his veins the blood which the Normans spilled for Duke William when he brought to England the rudimentary forms of jury justice, and the blood which the Saxons spilled for King Harold when he fought against Duke William for England's right to name her own rulers. It was a Scotch-Irishman whose ancestors had lived through the siege of Derry, and given to the northern parts of Ireland the prosperity so little shared by its southern parts. It was a French Huguenot of the strain of them that followed Henry of Navarre to the throne and Coligny to the block."

Neither, in our author's opinion, did Mr. Cairnes, Mr. F. L. Olmsted and other alien and cursory observers, however well-meaning and intelligent, succeed in drawing a correct picture of the negro slaves or of the influence exerted by the institution of slavery on the slave and on his master. It is more easy than accurate, he says, to infer from the abasement of the slave the degeneracy of the master, and the degradation of all who were neither masters nor slaves. As a matter of fact, the enslaved negro was "no mere black impersonation of those qualities alone which servitude implies. He was an individual with his individual peculiarities and of a race with marked characteristics of its own. Naturally without the progressive impulses of his master, he was at once less sensitive than his master would have been to the horrors and the shame of servitude, and capable, as his master would never have been, of fealty and affection to the very hand that chained him. He could find some incentive to industry in the difference between the lot he might have if he were a house servant and the lot he would have as a field hand. Slavery was, in the well-known phrase of Clay, 'a curse to the master and a wrong to the slave.' But it was not an unmitigated wrong to the slave; and two centuries of it in Virginia and half a century of it in the Black Belt were not enough to destroy the moral fibre of the master, to cheat him of his racial birthright, or to ban him from the portals of modern civilization."

In an effort to sketch in outline the form which slavery and the plantation system took during their new lease of life after the occupation of the Lower South, Mr. Brown selects for a typical example the particular Southern Commonwealth, Alabama, with whose history he is most familiar. Like Virginia, Alabama was in 1850 a distinctly agricultural community. What industrial difference there was did not lie in any greater diversification of industries, but in the somewhat changed character of the main industry, as it was practised in the younger Commonwealth. The growing of cotton gave to slave labor its best opportunity. The cotton planter profited most by the one quality in which, according to Mr. Cairnes, slave labor excelled—its capacity for organization and combination. Three-fourths of all the slaves in Alabama were owned by less than ten thousand men. The land holdings of these men were in proportion to their holdings of slaves. Their plantations frequently included thousands of acres, and from the big plantations came the bulk of the cotton crop. Its average annual value was about twenty millions of dollars. Practically all of the product was sent to New England, or exported to Europe. Not only did Alabama, like all the Cotton States, contribute far more than her share to the country's favorable balance of trade, but her products contributed materially to the prosperity of other sections of the United States. That the East profited by the Southern market is undisputed. The new Northwestern States were even more indebted to the Southern States than was the East; our author would date their prosperity from the development of a region which did not raise its own bread and meat, and could be reached by rivers that had their sources near the Great Lakes and their mouths on the Gulf.

The industrial life of the farmers and planters, who with their dependents and slaves made up more than half of the population of Alabama, differed from the industrial life of the same classes in Virginia chiefly in the concentration of lands and slaves in fewer hands, in the greater immediate profitableness of agriculture and in the greater rapidity with which lands were exhausted. Manufactures, banking, commerce and all other industries to which the term "business" is ordinarily applied can scarcely have supported more than seventy-five thousand, or one hundred thousand, white persons employing, perhaps, as many negro slaves. As in Virginia, there were no great cities; in fact, Mobile alone had any good claim to be called a city.

Mr. Brown testifies that, internally, the State was, in the main, well governed, according to the Jeffersonian idea of government. There was no such predominance of the great planter class as one might expect. Governors and legislators were chosen from various social ranks; many conspicuous men were distinctly of the self-made type. "The State had its period of folly over banks and paper money, but the opposition to the experiment was ably led, and, when the costly lesson had been learned, the people and their representatives paid for their folly manfully, frowning down the least suggestion of repudiation, and even overthrowing the party in power to get a sound Governor elected."

The part which the men of Alabama and other Cotton States played in Federal politics, and the fight which they made for national ascendency, is the specific subject of the papers collectively entitled "The Lower South." Before turning, however, to the militant aspect of the civilization of the Cotton States, our author has a word to say about its inner quality. He would have us look at the men of the Lower South in their homes, "planting their fields, enjoying their chief diversions of riding and hunting, celebrating their feasts, solemnizing their marriages, burying their dead. Their home life was, in fact, the most precious part of their heritage, from their Virginian, and Carolinian, and English ancestors." We must bear in mind that, although the great majority of white men in Alabama, as in other Cotton States, owned either no slaves at all or but one or two, nevertheless, the plantation was the typical community of the Lower South, and its laws and usages were quite as dominant socially as its economic influence was dominant politically.

Mr. Brown would have us recognize, what is too often overlooked, that "the plantation of the Lower South, like the plantation of Virginia, unfruitful as it was in art, and literature, and philanthropy, was yet the source of more cordiality and kindliness in all the ordinary relations of men and women, of more generous impulses, of a more constant protest against commercialism, of more distinction of manner and charm of personality, than any other way of life practised by Americans before the Civil War. Men crowded together in new cities, seeking chiefly money, in no wise rooted to the soil, thrown into no permanent relations of superior and inferior, could not be expected to develop those intangible, indefinable social qualities which made Southerners of the planter class intelligible and companionable to English country gentlemen, not because of their birth, but because of their habits of life, and thought, and speech." Our author deems it a superficial historical philosophy which dilates on the economic and institutional differences between geographical sections and ignores such smaller divergencies as appeared in the manners and speech of individuals. It is hard, no doubt, for a stranger to comprehend the gentleness and charm of the inner side of plantation life when his eyes are fixed on the harshness of the outward and militant aspect of the civilization of the Lower South. To one, however, who, like our author, "in the gloomy years of the slow upbuilding of that overthrown and prostrate civilization, has sought to see it as it was before it fell,—to one who has studied men's faces, which, however they hardened after laughter, were yet always quick to lighten up with kindliness and merriment, and women's faces which, however marked with the touch of sorrow and humiliation and an unfamiliar poverty, were yet sealed with a true seal of dignity and grace, to such a student of the old Southern life," the inner side of it is intelligible and singularly attractive.

In order that we may understand the nature and the magnitude of the effect which the rise of the Cotton States had upon the political history of the whole country, Mr. Brown would have us recall the general political situation when Senators and Representatives from the Lower South began to be a power in Congress. Taking the close of Monroe's second administration in March, 1825, as his point of departure, our author finds it a time when any strong and definite material interest adequately represented at Washington was sure to have a considerable, if not decisive, influence on the course of affairs. With the exit of the great men of the Revolutionary school had been put aside also, for a time at least, the great questions they had dealt with. What the new men who came to Washington from the Lower South represented "was not slavery alone, not cotton, and rice, and sugarcane alone, not agriculture alone, but the whole social organism, the whole civilization, whose decay in Virginia had been arrested by the rise of the States from which they came. They were committed to the maintenance in the most progressive country in the world of a primitive industry, a primitive labor system, and a patriarchal mode of life. They held that their main industry could be successfully prosecuted only with slave labor, and, while it was so prosecuted, it tended to exclude all other forms of industry. Its economic demands were imperative, its political demands were hardly less imperative. Economically, it demanded that the fewest possible restrictions be placed upon the exchange of its two or three staple products for the products of other countries, and that it be permitted to extend itself constantly to fresh lands. Politically, it demanded protection from criticism and from social and humanitarian reforms and changes. In order to enforce these economic and political demands, the representatives of the plantation interest must do more than stand on the defensive. They must not merely resist attack, they must prevent it. They must not only hold their own with the representatives of other sections, they must take the lead in the nation. They must be, not the equals merely, but the superiors, of Northern public men. In a word, they must rule."

How did it come to pass that the men of the Lower South were able for so many years to dominate Congress and the Union? The sources of their ascendency are carefully distinguished in the book before us. In the first place, the imperative demand behind them, the definite and specific nature of their task, was itself, in a time of obscured party divisions and but half-understood antagonisms, a principal cause of their success. Then, again, the Cotton States were sure of the support of Virginia and the Upper South. However the plantation system might decay there, whether the agricultural interest controlled there or not, the slaveholding interest was sure to be on their side, for the slaveryholder of the Upper South knew that the value of his slaves depended, not on the profits of his own tobacco plantation, but on the demand for slave labor on the rice, and sugar, and cotton plantations further South. The kinship of ideas and social usages between the halves of the South was scarcely less potent than the partial identity of interests; and, if more were needed, there was the strong tie of blood kinship as well. Neither was it hard to find allies in the North. There the places of the old merchant princes trafficking with the East were being taken by manufacturers, the fabric of whose fortunes was largely based on cotton. There were other manufacturers and merchants as well in New England who found in the South a sure and paying market which might be lost if the agitators had their way. In the West and Northwest a similar material interest could be relied on. The Northwestern farmer was bound to the Lower South, not merely by the fact that cotton was easily convertible into cash to pay for his breadstuffs and his beef and bacon, his interest also lay in the Southerner's refusal to make more than one appeal to the soil, a refusal which made it unlikely that the Southerner would ever become a rival. The Northwestern farmer may never have reasoned the matter out, but he knew where his products went and did not wish his customers disturbed.

Our author points out, however, that, when all these helps to leadership have been considered, one must still study the men of the Lower South themselves in order to understand why they were so long successful against the economic and moral forces they had to fight with, against the whole tendency of modern thought, against the whole drift of American progress and against the true spirit of liberty. The outcome of such a study has convinced our author that, if the power and place possessed by the owner of land and slaves in the Cotton States might make a weak man weaker, they were as sure to make a strong man stronger. "If the same conditions which in Colonial Virginia starved out common schools and limited the intellectual development of the mass of landless white men did yet breed Washington and Henry, those conditions, intensified in the Lower South, were as sure to breed strong leaders there as they were to limit the development of the mass. A study of the portraits and photographs of Southern statesmen of the old régime inspires one with the respect we always give to strength. These, one says of them, are such faces as might have belonged to the Markgrafen of mediæval Germany, to the Lords of the Marches in England and Scotland or to those Generals who, in the later ages of the Roman Empire, so often beat back the forces that have made modern Europe what it is."

In this notice of a remarkable series of essays we have confined ourselves to the author's account of the motives which led the men of the Lower South to seek control of the Federal Government, and to his analysis of the instrumentalities by which for a considerable time they attained a large measure of success. We must refer the reader to the book itself for an exposition of the power they exercised on the great permanent questions which were to be debated during the period between 1830 and 1850—the questions of taxation and revenue, internal improvements, public finance and foreign affairs and, finally, for the fight they had to make for the fruits of their victories.

M. W. H.

Asiatic Russia.

For the two volumes collectively entitled *Asiatic Russia* (McClure, Phillips & Co.) we are indebted to Mr. GEORGE FREDERICK WRIGHT, instructor in quaternary geology, and professor of the harmony of science and revelation in Oberlin College. The author is known to American readers by his previous books, "The Ice Age in North America" and "Man and the Glacial Period." It was in the course of his professional researches that he was led to project the work now published. He tells us in a preface that when, several years ago, he began to make preparations for a journey through China, Siberia and Central Asia, to collect information concerning the conditions of the region during the glacial period, he found it difficult to obtain such preliminary comprehensive knowledge of the country as would assure a maximum of profit. It was in the effort to collect such information that the thought of preparing the present volumes was suggested. Now that he has traversed the principal portions of the country described, and has seen with his own eyes the land, the existing varied populations and the numerous remains of ancient civilizations, the importance and interest of the subject have been greatly enhanced in his own mind, and his ability to understand the facts has been correspondingly increased.

Of the twenty-eight chapters in this work, no fewer than nine are devoted to an account of the geography, climate, geology and natural history of the section of the globe under review. There is a conclusive reason for considering at such length these aspects of the subject. The physical conditions of Asiatic Russia are unique. They have both moulded its past civilizations and shaped to a large degree the forces determining its future. The author points out that "the region of the Caucasus, the arid area centring in the closed basin of the Caspian and Aral Seas, the vast drainage basin tributary to the Arctic Ocean, and the splendid navigable river systems upon the Pacific coast bordering upon Japan and China can be appreciated in their full significance only by detailed study in connection with the general geological facts and the remarkable climatic conditions of the country. So intimately, indeed, are the physical conditions of the country related to the historical development that the last three chapters would logically have found a place in the history of the conquest and the account of the colonization. But, for fear of dismaying the general reader with too much science at the outset, they were deferred, as a sort of appendix, to the end." In view, however, of the fact that the climate, the geology and the natural history of Asiatic Russia, in addition to being extremely interesting in themselves, have been such potent factors in determining the historic development of the resident populations, Prof. Wright believes that most readers will turn back from the perusal of the chapters relating to those subjects to further study of the chapters dealing with the natural resources, the social conditions and the history of the region.

Why has Central Asia been such a disturbing factor in the progress of human events? Why have the movements of population from this radiating centre profoundly affected from the earliest times the history of the world? Our author thinks that much welcome light is shed upon this problem by an examination of the physical conditions fully set forth in the book before us. The irrigated belt about the base of the Tian-Shan and Hindu Kush Mountains seems to have been admirably adapted for the breeding place of nations, from whose subsequently overcrowded seat there should be pushed outward the lines of colonization. "There the lofty mountains not only give variety to the scenery and to the conditions of life, but, by condensing the moisture of the clouds and retaining it for a while in glaciers and perpetual snow-fields, finally let it down in due measure to meet the wants of the teeming peoples, which, in the midst of perpetual sunshine have grown up in dependence upon irrigation." In ancient times, however, the region was much more suited to the evolution and maintenance of a dense population than it is now. Prof. Wright would account for the greater density of the population of Central Asia in former days, partly by a change in social and political conditions, but partly, and perhaps more largely, by the physical changes indicated by close study of the geology of the region, and by the climatic changes affecting the distribution of plants and animals. He is inclined to think that the former greater rainfall, dependent on geological conditions, and profoundly affecting the climate, is the key to the puzzling historical problem.

From a sentence in the preface it appears that Prof. Wright accepts the hypothesis now disputed, if not discredited, that the first speakers of the Indo-European languages migrated from the region about the base of the Tian-Shan and Hindu Kush Mountains. The results of the migrations from Central Asia are seen to-day, he says, "in the Finns of Russia, in the Magyars of Hungary, in the Turks on the Bosphorus, in the Mongolian races of Eastern Asia and in the Red Indians of America, found from Behring Strait to Patagonia, as well as in the widespread Uralo-Altaic languages and in the still more widely-disseminated Aryan tongues." One naturally turns to the thirteenth chapter to see what reasons the author gives for adhering to the theory that the original Aryan centre is to be found in Central Asia. On page 262 we read: "As the southeastern portion of the Aral-Caspian depression is almost exactly in the centre of the eastern continent, so there is much to be said in favor of the theory that it is near the centre from which the human race originally dispersed itself over the surface of the earth. In that case the Mongolian tribes which now occupy the area are to be looked upon merely as long-time wanderers in the East who at last returned to their ancestral home. But, in fact, there can be but little doubt that, in prehistoric times, the Aryan language whose dialects are now spoken throughout Europe, and to which belong the classical literatures of Greece and Rome, as well as that of the ancient Sanscrit invaders of India, was developed somewhere in the great Aral-Caspian basin. This is indicated by the root-words which are common to Anglo-Saxon, Latin, Greek, Slavonic, Persian and Sanscrit, and which, at the same time, imply the conditions of life existing in the central area under consideration. The original people who spoke the Aryan tongue had the knowledge of the seasons, especially of winter, and of snow, ice, cows, sheep, goats, dogs, of the birch and of many other things, which would be obtained in this region, and nowhere else. From their common root-words we may also infer that they were familiar with ploughing, weaving, sewing; that they built roads, and ships, and houses; that they had domesticated the cow, the horse, the sheep and the dog, and were acquainted with the bear, the wolf, the mouse and the fly, that they made cloth from wool and hemp, and welded metals into the sword, the spear and the shield. Common words expressing all these things are found in the languages we have mentioned, and which are spoken from the western boundary of Europe to the plains of India."

Our author's conclusion is that the limitation of the common words to the things which are characteristic of the Aral-Caspian basin, as well as the geographical position of this area with reference to the dispersion of the Indo-European tongues, point to it with irresistible force as the region in which they had their common development. He admits, indeed, that there are many in recent times who would shift the imaginary centre to Europe, but he points out that even they, for the most part, would keep it within the Aral-Caspian basin by locating it upon the banks of the Volga, where the conditions are in many respects similar to those which prevailed around the upper middle section of the Oxus or Amu Daria. Attention is further directed to the fact, often overlooked, that the supposed original centre of Aryan civilization has never lost its importance. "Balkh and Merv were great cities in the earliest periods referred to in written history. Zoroaster (the founder of the religion which in early times prevailed in Persia, and still survives among the Parsees in India and the so-called fire-worshippers who, until lately, made pilgrimages to the perpetual burning gas wells at Baku, on the Caspian). Zoroaster if he was not born in Bactria, most certainly died there, and Balkh, its capital, was for a long time the central seat of his religious system. For a considerable period this 'mother of cities' upon the Amu Daria was a formidable rival, in influence if not in military prowess, of Ecbatana, Nineveh and Babylon, its contemporaries on the plains of Persia and in the valley of the Euphrates. In later times Bactria emerges into history through its conquest by the Medes in the seventh century before Christ, while later still it is enumerated among the conquests of Cyrus and the dependencies or satrapies of Darius. Alexander the Great spent here nearly two years in efforts to extend the conquest of Greece to the Jaxartes; while his successors occupied Merv, and surrounded it with most extensive fortifications, and founded numerous Grecian cities to serve for the defence of the new empire, and as outposts of Grecian civilization. In the third century before Christ a Græco-Bactrian kingdom was founded, and continued for a hundred years or more. The traveller will find in the museum at Tashkent innumerable coins and some interesting works of Grecian art illustrative of this period, when Western civilization was making a premature struggle to restore its dominion in the cradle of its ancestors. But success was not to attend these efforts until the closing part of the nineteenth century, when, with the means at her command furnished by the experience of ages and the mechanical inventions of the century, Russia was able firmly to plant her feet on the sources of the Jaxartes and the Oxus, and to open up to the country the opportunity of joining with the Western world in the progressive march of her vigorous civilization."

Widely different opinions have been expressed concerning Asiatic Russia's capacity for development. The twenty-third chapter of this work is allotted to a consideration of the subject. The author shows that no doubt is tenable touching one point; namely, the existence of a surplus population in Russia always ready for emigration. Owing to their social organization, their religious ideas and their natural temperament, the Russians are the most prolific race in Europe, the annual birth-rate for European Russia being 48 3-10 to the thousand, as compared to a death rate of 33 6-10, leaving at the present time an annual surplus of births amounting to 1,613,377. This rate of increase has been for two hundred years so steady that it can pretty safely be counted upon to continue. From natural increase alone the population of Russia doubles once in about sixty years. Unquestionably this surplus could have been provided for in European Russia, but under the existing social and agricultural conditions, the virgin soil of Siberia has seemed to be more attractive than the waste or worn-out lands in the settled portions of Russia, which demand higher cultivation, and, consequently, an amount of capital which it is not easy for the peasant to obtain. Siberia, therefore, has steadily added to its population by immigration, as well as by natural increase. In 1888 the steamers running on the Obi and Irtysh rivers carried 26,129 emigrants; in 1891, 60,000; in 1896 and 1897, nearly 200,000 each year. Since the Trans-Siberian Railroad has been running and since emigrants have been carried by sea to the Usuri region via Odessa, the Suez Canal and Vladivostock, the annual addition to the population of Siberia by immigration amounts to considerably more than the number last named. At the same time, the birth rate in Siberia is higher even than that in European Russia, while the death rate is slightly less.

So much for one factor of development. Let us turn to another, to wit: the quantity of cultivable land. The total area of Asiatic Russia is estimated at 6,564,778 square miles, of which 4,833,496 belong to Siberia proper, including the region of the Amur River, and that bordering the Pacific coast; 1,548,825 belong to Central Asia, and 94,182 to Trans-Caucasia. In by far the larger part of Siberia, however, agriculture is practically out of the question, on account either of the shortness of the summer and extreme severity of the winter, or of the mountainous character of the country. After eliminating the portions unfitted for agriculture, Ballod has computed that there are only about 500,000 square miles of arable land in Siberia proper, lying principally between 55 degrees and 58 degrees 30 minutes, north latitude, stretching southward, however, in the Altai region to 51 degrees. Of this arable area, 192,000 square miles are in west Siberia, mostly along the upper portions of the Obi River and its tributaries; 20,000 in the steppe region of Akmolinsk and Semipalatinsk; 100,000 in east Siberia; 85,000 in Transbaikalia; 40,000 in Amur, and 63,000 in the Usuri district.

Our author points out that this computation would give Siberia alone "a cultivable area nearly equal to that contained in what are called the twelve North Central States of the United States of America, namely, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska and Kansas, for, though these combined have an area of 753,550 square miles, the amount of waste and desert area included is fully sufficient to bring the area of cultivation down approximately to the same limits as in Siberia, while the climatic conditions, the nature of the soil and the proximity of both regions to other natural resources are strikingly similar, coal and copper and iron being found in convenient localities in both regions. In both cases, also, vast forests and outlying pasture lands surround the margins, and great river systems facilitate all kinds of internal commerce. Even with the present methods of extensive and, consequently, low-grade cultivation, this portion of the United States sustains a population of 26,000,000, or forty-five to the square mile of arable land; while the corresponding portion of Siberia now has a population of only about 5,000,000, or about ten to the square mile. Even, therefore, when this portion of Siberia attains the stage of progress already reached in the Mississippi Valley, it will have a population of about 25,000,000, while, upon reaching the stage of development already attained in the most highly cultivated portions of European Russia, it will easily sustain a population of 50,000,000."

The agricultural resources of the other portions of Russia's Asiatic dominions have been more fully developed, Turkestan and the Caucasus being the seat of some of the oldest civilizations of the world, where agriculture has at times attained its highest perfection. Although there is reason to suppose that formerly the rainfall throughout this region was greater than it is at the present time, our author deems it improbable that the diminution has been appreciable during the last few hundred years. He infers that there would be no difficulty from lack of water in restoring the agricultural prosperity which characterized the country in the time of Jenghiz Khan and Tamerlane. His observations have led him to believe that, while the interests of the peoples dwelling on the lower courses of the Syr Daria and the Amu Daria should be protected, an immense amount of water now wasted might easily be diverted to the rich loess-covered areas near the mountains, which are at present barren from lack of moisture. His conclusion is that, whereas the present population of Russia's central Asiatic provinces amounts to only a little over five millions, it might, like that of Egypt under English rule, be doubled easily before the middle of the twentieth century, and without much difficulty quadrupled in a hundred years.

Trans-Caucasia, which has been so long the meeting place for the most enterprising races in the world, has more nearly reached the limit of its development than have other sections of Asiatic Russia. In its 94,000 square miles of territory it has a population of more than five and one-half millions, averaging sixty-four to the square mile. In other words, the population is already nearly twice as dense as that of the northern central division of the United States, and three times as dense as that of the United States considered as a whole. In the greater part of Trans-Caucasia, therefore, the limit of population may be held to have been nearly reached.

Prof. Wright is one of those optimistic observers who think that there is no ground for the fears that are felt in Europe, especially in England, lest Russia shall absorb all Asia, and become the autocrat of the world. He finds reassurance in the fact that Russia's expansion has been chiefly toward the East into thinly settled countries, where the conflict was more with nature than with man, and that it has been directed between parallels of latitude where the conditions of life are closely similar to those in the home-land. The reader is also invited to observe that the acquisition of territory in Asia by Russia has been attended with much less war and bloodshed than is usually the case in territorial conquests. "After the first sharp contest of Yermak with the Tatars of the Tobol, there was little occasion for warfare until reaching central Siberia, when the Buriats and others put up a vigorous opposition for a while but soon were able to live side by side with their conquerors in peace and mutual respect. In some of the northeastern portions, especially among the Koriaks, there were scenes of indescribable bloodshed and horror, but when these are compared with those connected with the occupation by other nations of the United States, of Africa, and of India, they seem relatively insignificant, while the possession of the entire valley of the Amur and the Usuri was obtained from China by a peaceable treaty won by the persistence of Muravieff in a policy that was continually discouraged by the Ministry at St. Petersburg. At the same time possession of Trans-Caucasia was obtained by the abdication of the King of Georgia in favor of the Tsar, because, under the pressure of the Mohammedan Powers, he was unable to maintain his independence. The conquest of the entire Caucasus came as a natural and necessary result from this heritage. The occupation of Turkestan has also come about largely through the voluntary submission of the Khirgiz Tatars when they needed the aid of Russia to protect them against the violence of their Usbeg and Turkoman neighbors. The advance of Russia to the mountain border of the great central Asiatic plateau therefore became necessary, both for the protection of her own citizens and for the general preservation of peace."

With regard to Manchuria, our author thinks that the occupation of that region by Russia has come about through natural causes which were imperative, and need not endanger the relations of the empire to other nations. In his opinion the general good required that the increasing population in eastern Siberia should have ready access to a port upon the Pacific Ocean. It is well known that this access was granted by China to the Russians by the Treaty of Pekin, which permitted the building of the Chinese Eastern Railway to connect Siberia with Port Arthur. Prof. Wright adds: "If, as seems probable, the Chinese shall be so slow in recovering themselves that Russia shall have to retain the country permanently under her protection, even that will not be a calamity of great magnitude to the rest of the world, while it would probably be of as great advantage to Manchuria itself (which is but thinly settled) as has been the Russian occupation of Turkestan to that fertile but disorganized region." Prof. Wright looks with favor on another Russian project, that, namely, of constructing a railway from Kalgan to Pekin, a project which has been thus far successfully opposed by the representatives of the British Government. "Nor is the railroad across Manchuria the only one which the interests of mankind demand in that region. A saving of about 900 miles for the commerce between Siberia and China would be effected by a railroad extending from Kiakhta across the Mongolian Desert to Pekin on the seacoast, by way of Kalgan. This has long been the favorite caravan route between China and Russia, and presents no serious engineering difficulties. As far as Urga the country is fertile and well watered and capable of sustaining a much larger population than is possible under the present nomadic conditions, while even across the so-called Desert of Gobi there is everywhere sufficient pasturage for camels and horses, and wells are more frequent than they are in many places in the Transcaspian region. At Kalgan the railroad would reach the most important point of traffic and commerce in northwestern China."

Our author recognizes that the Russian possessions in Central Asia are in great need of direct railroad connection across Persia to the Indian Ocean. "There can be no question," he thinks, "that the general good requires that such a vast and growing population as there is in Turkestan should have free access for its surplus products to the markets of the world. If the interests of the United States demand a canal across the Isthmus of Panama, much more is Asiatic Russia in need of free channels of communication with the whole outside world." Prof. Wright does not deem it likely, however, that the opening of these lines of traffic will lead to extensive Russian colonization or military occupation. The reasons for this opinion, which in England would be deemed paradoxical, are the following: "The Russian colonist has not heretofore readily entered into competition with those who were in actual occupation of their own country. The Russian emigrant finds himself most at home when called upon to subdue the wild forces of nature, and has never ventured where he would become a close competitor of densely populated regions. Nothing would be more out of its element than a Russian colonist in India, or a Russian agriculturist in China. As it is, the Siberian peasant is jealous of the new emigrants from his own country who are restricting by their presence the free occupation of waste land to which the pioneers were accustomed. Much less could the Russian peasant with his habits of agriculture compete side by side with the agricultural methods of the Chinese. That is to say, what has been described as the Russian glacier will meet in China with an obstacle similar to that which confronts it on its Western border. Russia's expansion toward the East has been largely due to the fact that there was no room to expand on the West, since there the territory was fully occupied by a dense and well-organized population. In China she encounters a still more dense, though less thoroughly organized, population; so that in the advance of Russia in that direction we seem to have a repetition of the old problem concerning the results which would follow when an irresistible meets an immovable."

It is acknowledged that there is in Manchuria, and to some extent in Mongolia, much land still to be possessed. What our author asserts is that there is not enough land to postpone the conflict between Russia and China for any great length of time. China he regards as immovable or impenetrable, by reason of her vast numbers and of the frugality, industry and remarkable virility of her people. "The Chinese cannot be displaced by immigrants, as the inhabitants of the thinly populated and barbarous regions of Siberia, America and Africa have been. Indeed, all bordering nations are taxed to the utmost to prevent being overwhelmed by Chinese emigrants, who are seeking relief from the crowded conditions and sharp competition which everywhere prevail in the Celestial Empire. In the very nature of things, China must be for the Chinese, and Russia must adjust herself to live, in the future, side by side with a powerful nation bounding her on the southeast, as she now lives side by side with the powerful nations of central Europe."

What about the future relations of Russia and Japan? Our author is convinced that with the Mikado's empire also the Russian Government will be ultimately constrained to make permanent terms of peace. He sees that, while the enterprising island empire controls the neighboring seas and is compelled by the rapid increase of its population and the limitations of its present territory to seek foreign trade and colonial expansion, the competition between the two countries must be sharp in the extreme, and the risk of international complications will long exist. Here, evidently, lies the most serious and the most imminent of the problems presented in the Far East. "When one reflects," says Prof. Wright, "upon the capacity of these three great nations [Russia, China and Japan] to increase in population to twice their present number by the middle of the twentieth century, and to four times the number at the close of the century, it is enough to make him stand aghast at the difficulty and imperiousness of the problem which confronts their statesmen."